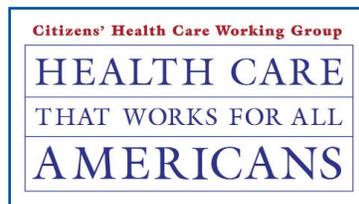




# COMMUNITY MEETING HOST GUIDE



**Citizens' Health Care Working Group**

**It's time to do something about Health Care**

**[www.citizenshealthcare.gov](http://www.citizenshealthcare.gov)**

This Guide is modeled after the Voices & Choices Community Conversations Host Guide, copyrighted by AmericaSpeaks.

## Dear Community Meeting Host,

Thank you for joining the dialogue on Health Care that Works for All Americans. By leading a thoughtful conversation in your community about health care in the United States, you're helping the Citizens' Health Care Working Group to develop recommendations to the President and Congress on health care.

This Host Guide is intended as both a toolbox and a roadmap to help you lead a meeting on one of the greatest challenges facing our country. It is designed to be used with accompanying information on the Citizens' Health Care Working Group website ([www.citizenshealthcare.gov](http://www.citizenshealthcare.gov)), including the discussion guide for participants.

In this guidebook, you will find:

An overview of the process and how a Community Meeting works.

Guidance for planning a Community Meeting, including tips on picking a time and place, reaching out to participants, and more.

Guidance for tailoring the materials for your meeting.

A detailed script and guide for facilitating the discussion itself.

Information about what happens after the meeting is over.

After your session is complete, please be sure to report the results of your discussion by going online to [www.citizenshealthcare.gov/speak\\_out/tell\\_us.php](http://www.citizenshealthcare.gov/speak_out/tell_us.php).

The session that you will lead is part of a truly national discussion. Across the U.S., many similar meetings with groups large and small are being held. The results of these meetings will inform the President and Congress about what Americans want in their health care system.

Thanks again for your important contribution.

Sincerely,

Citizens' Health Care Working Group

# OVERVIEW

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## What is a Community Meeting?

Across the country, individuals and groups are hosting meetings to share their opinions and create recommendations on how to make health care work for all Americans. Meetings are taking place in homes, schools, businesses, churches, community centers and libraries. They may be as small as six people or as large as several hundred.

During the meetings, participants discuss health care coverage and ways to improve and strengthen the health care system. The Citizens' Health Care Working Group will develop interim recommendations based on input from citizens attending these meetings. The interim recommendations will be circulated to the public for comment in the summer of 2006. Following a 90-day public comment period, the Working Group will submit a final set of recommendations to Congress and the President that includes the results of this public input.

## Looking for More Help?

We expect Community Meetings you will host will take about ninety minutes to complete, although they may be shorter or longer.

This Guide was created to help walk you through the steps of planning and conducting your own Community Meeting. However, if you have questions that aren't answered here, visit the Community Meeting Help Desk on our website at [www.pfidc.org/helpdesk](http://www.pfidc.org/helpdesk). There, you can submit your question to our experienced planners who are organizing more than 30 community meetings across the country. If your question is timely, you can contact Susanna Knouse at 202-467-2778 ([susanna@pfidc.org](mailto:susanna@pfidc.org)), Elizabeth Magruder at 202-467-2779 ([elizabeth@pfidc.org](mailto:elizabeth@pfidc.org)) or Susanna Haas at 202-775-3939 x1019 ([shaas@americaspeaks.org](mailto:shaas@americaspeaks.org)).

If you need assistance specifically in engaging your organization or group, please contact Jessica Federer at 301-443-1521 ([jfederer@ahrq.gov](mailto:jfederer@ahrq.gov)).

## Five Steps to Hosting a Successful Community Meeting

There are a few quick and easy things that you will need to remember to do in order to ensure a successful Community Meeting. These five steps are summarized below and described in greater detail in the following sections of this guide.

### Step 1: Getting Started

#### *Find a Convenient Location.*

It could be someone's home, a place of work, or a public space like a library, classroom or community center. Choose a spot that is comfortable and accessible.

#### *Set a Time and Date for Your Meeting.*

Most Community Meetings will take about ninety minutes to complete. Pick a time and date that will be convenient for the largest number of people that you hope will participate in the meeting. If you believe you will have more or less than ninety minutes, see page 17 for recommendations about how to adjust the program's agenda.

#### *Invite Participants and Advertise Your Meeting.*

Contact your friends, family members, co-workers, community groups, and anyone else who might wish to participate. Think about who you might approach to bring greater diversity into the meeting. Use the flyer template at [www.citizenshealthcare.gov/community/mtg\\_kit.php](http://www.citizenshealthcare.gov/community/mtg_kit.php) to advertise the session.

### Step 2: Prepare for Your Meeting

#### *Compile Materials to Support Your Meeting.*

Make sure that you have all of the materials that you need to support your meeting. See page 8 for a full list of materials available from the Citizens' Health Care Working Group. Send discussion guides to participants who say they will attend and suggest that they read the guide beforehand or let them know that they can download information from the Working Group website.

#### *Familiarize Yourself with the Community Meeting Agenda and Discussion Guide.*

Carefully read through the agenda and script for the meeting, as well as the discussion guide, and make sure you understand your role. Take a look at the facilitation tips on page 10.

### Step 3: Lead Your Community Meeting

#### *Use the Community Meeting Materials and Script to Facilitate Your Meeting.*

The Community Meeting materials available at [www.citizenshealthcare.gov/community/mtg\\_kit.php](http://www.citizenshealthcare.gov/community/mtg_kit.php) and script should provide you with everything you need to walk your group through each step of the meeting.

#### *Record Group Agreements from Your Meeting.*

Keep in mind that you will be reporting the results of your Community Meeting and that it is important to make sure you have accurate records of what takes place. You may wish to ask someone in each group to serve as the meeting reporter; that person should take notes and summarize the important points that are agreed on. Your reporter does not need to keep a play-by-play account of the discussion, but he or she should summarize the group's views on the specific questions that you address.

You may wish to distribute the poll available on the website, tabulate results, and include them in your report to us. Alternatively, you may direct participants to the poll so that they can fill it out on line at their convenience.

## **Step 4: Report Back Your Results to the Citizens' Health Care Working Group**

### ***Fill out the Meeting Summary Form***

Fill out the Meeting Summary Form available online at [www.citizenshealthcare.gov/community/mtg\\_kit.php](http://www.citizenshealthcare.gov/community/mtg_kit.php) to record who attended your meeting, what you agreed upon, and how the session went overall.

### ***Submit your Summary form to the Citizens' Health Care Working Group***

You may e-mail your form to [Citizenshealth@ahrq.gov](mailto:Citizenshealth@ahrq.gov), please put "Meeting Summary" in the subject field. Alternatively, you may mail the meeting report to "Meeting Summary; Citizens' Health Care Working Group; 7201 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 575; Bethesda, Maryland 20814. If you have asked participants to complete our poll, you may include those results in your e-mail or you can mail completed poll forms for us to tabulate.

## **Step 5: Encourage Active Use of the Citizens' Health Care Working Group's Web Site**

*Urge your meeting participants to go online to [www.citizenshealthcare.gov](http://www.citizenshealthcare.gov) and express their views.*

The Public Comment Center, Citizen Blogs and Discussion Forums, all accessible from the home page, provide opportunities to let the Working Group and other Americans know what you think.

## **Step 6: Keep the Discussion Going**

### ***Encourage Participants to Host Their Own Community Meetings.***

Remind participants that the Citizens' Health Care Working Group can only succeed by involving as many people as possible in the discussion. Let them know that they can sponsor their own meeting or remain involved with the process by checking in with the Working Group website.

# GETTING STARTED

## Pick a Location, Date and Time for Your Meeting

The first step to organizing a Community Meeting will be to decide where and when to hold it. This decision will shape who is able to attend the session and the kind of experience that participants will have.

### Location

You will want to pick a location that is comfortable, quiet, and easy to access. The location you use should have room for people sit in a circle (ideally around a table) and, if possible, should have a computer and/or LCD projector, or DVD player (if you are able to burn the video onto a DVD).

*Examples of locations that you may wish to use are:*

- A conference room at a place of work
- A community center
- A community room at a local library
- A school or university classroom
- A place of worship
- Your home or that of a friend

Meetings can be large or small. For example, your employer or an organization of which you are a member may wish to hold a larger meeting, while a meeting of neighbors could be much smaller.

You will likely want to break groups larger than 10-12 people into smaller groups to ensure that everyone has a voice. Make sure you have sufficient space, tables, and chairs for breaking large groups into smaller ones.

### Date and Time

Different dates and times may work better for different people. A mid-day, brown bag lunch during the week may be the best time for some; or you may choose an evening or weekend.

Think about what days and times would make it easiest for the largest number of people to participate. Pick a few possibilities and test them out with some of the people who you plan to invite.

Most meetings will take about ninety minutes. If you have more or less time, the program may be modified to accommodate your needs (See page 17).

## Inviting Participants

### How Large Should Your Meeting Be?

A Community Meeting can be as small as six people or as large as several hundred. The best discussions will take place in small, diverse groups of about ten people. If you plan to host more than 10-12 people, then you will likely need to break the group up into multiple small groups to ensure that everyone gets a chance to fully participate.

The advantage of hosting larger groups is that you will generate more energy and momentum for the effort. However, be careful not to overstretch yourself and to set a manageable goal.

### Bringing Diversity into the Meeting

Diverse participation in your meeting will ensure a higher quality dialogue in which people learn from each other and are exposed to different perspectives and experiences. Involving people of different ages, backgrounds, and walks of life will add to the richness of the experience for everyone involved.

The best way to attract a diverse group is to co-host the session with other individuals or organizations which may know different people or have different networks than you do. If you tend to know people of a certain age group or ethnic background, think about who you may be able to work with who can bring diversity to the meeting. Try to push your boundaries and do what you can to bring in other perspectives.

### Recruitment Tips

- There is **no substitute** for a personal invitation. Email, phone calls, and letters are useful, but a face-to-face invitation will always generate the best results.
- Get together with your co-host(s) and **map out your different networks**. Set targets about how many people each of you will invite and from where. Think about who can reach out to young people, people of different ethnic groups, people with different income levels.
- **Piggy-back on existing meetings** in your community. Offer to host a meeting on health care as part of a regularly scheduled meeting, or if there isn't enough time on the agenda, ask the group if they would be interested in attending a separate meeting on health care.
- **Publicize your meeting** on local community calendars, websites, newsletters or listservs. Use the flyer template in this guide to advertise the session.
- When you reach out to people, focus on how well they think our health care system is working for all Americans. What have their experiences been with our health care system? What have they heard about other people's experiences?
- Assume that a significant number of people whom you invite will not be able to attend. Especially, if you are inviting people who do not know you well, it may be necessary to invite three or four times as many people as you want to attend in order to reach your target.

## How to Use the Materials

Each meeting will need someone to facilitate the discussion. Hosts should follow the facilitator script (on page 11), which will take them through each step of the process.

If you are able to watch or download the video from the Citizens' Health Care Working Group website, it can be used as an introduction to what the Working Group is and what they are doing. If you are not able to use the video, you can use the slide show from the website (particularly the first five slides). See [www.citizenshealthcare.gov/community/mtg\\_kit.php](http://www.citizenshealthcare.gov/community/mtg_kit.php) for both the video and the slide show.

A Discussion Guide is available for participants in your meeting. The guide provides basic background information about the U.S. health care system and provides key facts on the main topics of the discussion. This guide is also available at the meeting kit web site.

## Materials Checklist

In addition to this guide, the following materials are available from the Citizens' Health Care Working Group website as part of your Community Meeting Kit. Please view the entire Kit on the web at: [www.citizenshealthcare.gov/community/mtg\\_kit.php](http://www.citizenshealthcare.gov/community/mtg_kit.php)

- A **video** on the Working Group mission to obtain citizen input on health care in America
- A **slide show** in Microsoft PowerPoint with a description of the Working Group and background information on the issues
- A **discussion guide** for each participant with background information on the issues
- A **meeting summary form** to record outcomes from your discussion
- An **outreach flyer** template that you can personalize to recruit participants to your conversation

### *Other materials or resources you may need to support your meeting include:*

- A **computer and/or LCD projector, or DVD player** in order to show participants video downloaded from the Working Group website
- A **flip chart** and markers to take notes on what you discuss (optional)
- Snacks and drinks** to make participants feel more welcome
- Extra paper** on which to take notes, and **pens or pencils** for those who don't bring their own

# LEADING YOUR MEETING

## Agenda Overview

*A more detailed script and facilitator guide may be found on page 11. For suggestions on how to modify the agenda, see page 17.*

- Part 1:** Welcome Participants and Introductions (Suggested Time: 5 minutes)  
*Host welcomes participants and provides context for the meeting. Participants briefly introduce themselves.*
  
- Part 2:** Introduction to the Citizens' Health Care Working Group (Suggested Time: 10 minutes)  
*Participants either view the introductory video or slide show for background on the Working Group.*
  
- Part 3:** Discussion on Individual Values about Health Care (Suggested Time: 10 minutes)  
*Participants share with each other the values they believe are important to consider throughout the discussion.*
  
- Part 4:** Discussion on Benefits and Services (Suggested Time: 15 minutes)  
*Participants discuss how health insurance coverage should work.*
  
- Part 5:** Discussion on Getting Health Care (Suggested Time: 10 minutes)  
*Participants talk about what they have learned from their experiences with getting or trying to get health care.*
  
- Part 6:** Discussion on Financing (Suggested Time: 20 minutes)  
*Participants share their ideas on how we can work together to pay for the system we want.*
  
- Part 7:** Discussion on Tradeoffs (Suggested Time: 15 minutes)  
*Participants share what they are willing to do to help make health care work for all Americans.*
  
- Part 8:** Next Steps, Thanks, and Meeting Summary Form (Suggested Time: 5 minutes)  
*Hosts thank participants, ask if participants will commit to holding meetings themselves, and fill out the Meeting Summary Form online.*

## Facilitation Tips

In hosting a Community Meeting, you or one of your co-hosts will be responsible for facilitating the discussion. Your job will be to help the group stay on task, make sure that everyone's voice is heard, and foster group agreements. Keep the following tips in mind:

### Serve as a Neutral Guide

Your role is to help support the discussion. The best way to do that is to maintain a neutral position and to hold back on voicing your own opinions. Instead, focus on keeping the discussion going and making sure everyone has a voice.

### Establish Ground Rules for the Group

Your discussion will proceed better if you and the group agree on clear ground rules. For example:

- Listen respectfully
- Hear from everyone
- One person talks at a time
- Stay on task

### You Do Not Have to be an Expert

Don't feel that you must be an expert on the issues. Before your discussion, read the various materials you've been provided. If questions come up in your discussion, consider assigning someone to do more research.

### Ask Probing Questions

You may find that in order to get the best from your group, you'll need to prod them a bit; sometimes pushing participants to be clearer, sometimes inviting conversation about a point that you think merits more discussion, sometimes seeking to find a measure of common ground. Some useful questions you may want to ask at the right moment:

- What is the key point here?
- Does anyone want to support or challenge that point?
- Could you give an example to illustrate the point?
- Are there any points on which most of us agree?

### Reflect Back Themes from the Discussions

As you begin to hear common themes or areas of agreement, it will be useful to reflect back to the group what you are hearing and check in to see if everyone agrees. You might say: "So, it sounds like several of you are saying..." Or: "What I hear the group saying is ... Is that right?"

### Be Mindful of Time and Take Notes

You will want to pay attention to the time of each task to ensure that you are able to complete each step of the meeting. Some facilitators find it useful to ask a volunteer from the group to keep time and/or to take notes.

## Facilitator Script

Please note: If participants are divided into groups, the leader will need to save time in each session for the groups to report back.

Agenda Item	Activity Summary	Suggested Talking Points
<p><b>Welcome and Participant Introductions</b></p> <p><i>Suggested Time: 5 Minutes</i></p>	<p>Use this time to welcome participants and provide them with some context about the session.</p> <p>Ask participants to go around and briefly introduce themselves.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Good evening and welcome. My name is _____, and on behalf of the Citizens’ Health Care Working Group, I thank you for taking the time to be here today.”</li> <li>• “Let me begin by telling you a bit about the Citizens’ Health Care Working Group. In 2003, Congress passed a law creating the Working Group and members were appointed to it in February 2005. The Working Group is tasked with holding a national discussion on health care with the American people and submitting recommendations to the President and Congress at the end of September 2006.”</li> <li>• “Over the next several months, the Citizens’ Health Care Working Group will involve thousands of people in meetings around the country. In the end, the process will produce clear recommendations on how to make health care work for all Americans.”</li> <li>• “This discussion is important because we need to figure out how to address the problems with our health care system. This is a unique opportunity to tell the President and Congress exactly how we want the health care system to change.” <i>(You may wish to talk more about why this is important or what motivated you to host the discussion.)</i></li> <li>• “Many other Community Meetings are taking place across the country. At the end of our discussion, I hope that some of you will volunteer to host your own meeting. We need as many people as possible giving input into this process, so the Working Group can develop recommendations that will really work for all Americans.”</li> <li>• “Over the next 90 minutes, we are going to be talking about several things: (1) what health care benefits and services should be provided?; (2) how do we want health care delivered?; (3) how should health care coverage be financed?; and then (4) what trade-offs are we willing to make in either benefits or financing to ensure access to affordable, high quality health care coverage and services?”</li> </ul>

Agenda Item	Activity Summary	Suggested Talking Points
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “You all should have a discussion guide that will provide background information for our meeting.”</li> <li>• “Does anyone have any questions? Would anyone like to volunteer to help me take notes on what we talk about?”</li> <li>• “Before we begin, let’s go around and briefly introduce ourselves?”</li> </ul>
<p><b>Introduction to the Citizens’ Health Care Working Group</b></p> <p><i>Video or Slide Show</i>  <i>Suggested Time: 10 minutes</i></p>	<p>Play the video on a computer (with an LCD projector, if possible) or DVD player (if it has been downloaded previously).</p> <p>If you cannot use the video, use the slide show (particularly the first five slides)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Now that we have gotten a chance to meet each other, let’s learn a bit about the Citizens’ Health Care Working Group so that we can start our meeting...”</li> </ul>
<p><b>American Values</b></p> <p><i>Suggested Time: 10 Minutes</i></p>	<p>Read the discussion questions out loud and ask the group to take a minute to think about their answers. Suggest that they may wish to write their thoughts down on paper.</p> <p>Then ask members of the group to share some of their responses.</p> <p>Look for and identify common themes and agreements across the group’s discussion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “We want to talk about changing our health care system so it will serve all of us better than it does now. As we think about this together, what should we really hope for? What should we really worry about?”</li> <li>• “You may find it useful to write down your answers on a sheet of paper so that you can focus on listening to others when they share their answers.”</li> <li>• “When we’re done, we’ll share our values and learn about what motivated each of us to be here.”</li> <li>• “Let’s start the discussion by thinking about:  <b>What does “health care that works for all Americans” mean to you?</b> And as we consider ways to improve our health care system, what values and/or principles do you believe are fundamental?”</li> </ul> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexibility</li> <li>• Personal responsibility</li> <li>• Accountability</li> <li>• Shared responsibility</li> <li>• Common good</li> </ul>

Agenda Item	Activity Summary	Suggested Talking Points
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “In the time we have left at this meeting we’d like to talk about how you would answer the 4 questions that the Congress has asked. We will divide up the time so that we get to each question as best as we can in the time we have. At the end of the meeting, we’d like you to complete a questionnaire that we will send to the Citizens’ Health Care Working Group, along with a short report, so that that your views will be counted.”</li> </ul>
<p><b>Benefits and Services</b></p> <p><i>Suggested Time: 15 Minutes</i></p>	<p>Ask participants to turn to the Benefits and Services section of their Discussion Guide (pages 8-9) and to read the information provided. You may want to ask a volunteer to read the section out loud.</p> <p>Read the discussion question out loud and ask the group to take a minute to think about their answers. Suggest that they may wish to write down their answers.</p> <p>Then ask members of the group to share some of the answers and look for common themes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The first question Congress has asked is: What health care benefits and services should be provided?”</li> <li>• “Let’s take a few minutes to review the background on Benefits and Services in our Discussion Guide on pages 8-9.” <i>(Wait 2-3 minutes.)</i></li> <li>• “Does anyone have any questions about anything that you have read? This session involves both how health coverage should be organized, and what kinds of health care should be covered by insurance or other types of health programs.”</li> <li>• “Health care coverage can be organized in different ways. Two different models are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide coverage for particular groups of people (for example, employees, people who are elderly or cannot work because of disability, or people with very low incomes) as is the case now); or</li> <li>• Provide coverage for everyone, for a defined level of benefits (either by expanding the current system or creating a new system).</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Why do you think that either of these approaches would be the better way to provide coverage?”</b></p>
<p><b>Getting Health Care</b></p> <p><i>Suggested Time: 10 Minutes</i></p>	<p>Ask participants to turn to the Getting Health Care section of their Discussion Guide (pages 10-11) and to read the information provided. You may want to ask a volunteer to read the section out loud.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Our next discussion task is to talk about what you have learned from your experiences with getting or trying to get health care.”</li> <li>• “Let’s take a few minutes to review the background on Getting Health Care in our Discussion Guide on pages 10-11.” <i>(Wait 2-3 minutes.)</i></li> <li>• “Does anyone have any questions about anything that you read? Our task is to discuss:</li> </ul>

Agenda Item	Activity Summary	Suggested Talking Points
	<p>Read the discussion question out loud and ask the group to take a minute to think about their answers. Suggest that they write down their thoughts.</p> <p>Ask the group to share some of their answers.</p> <p>Look for and identify common themes and agreements across the group's discussion.</p>	<p><b>What kinds of difficulties have you had in getting access to health care services?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Let's talk about our experiences and see if we can find some common themes."</li> </ul>
<p><b>Financing</b> <i>Suggested Time: 20 Minutes</i></p>	<p>Ask participants to turn to the Financing section of their Discussion Guide (pages 12-13) and to read the information provided. You may want to ask a volunteer to read the section out loud.</p> <p>Read the discussion question out loud and ask the group to take a minute to think about their answers. Suggest that they write down their thoughts.</p> <p>Ask the group to share some of their answers.</p> <p>Try to identify common themes across the group's discussion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Our next discussion task is to talk about how we should pay for health care."</li> <li>• "Let's take a few minutes to review the background on Financing in our Discussion Guide on pages 12-13." (<i>Wait 2-3 minutes.</i>)</li> <li>• "Does anyone have any questions about anything that you read?"</li> <li>• "This discussion involves how much people should contribute to the costs of health care and insurance, directly, and indirectly, as taxpayers, as well as what the roles of individual and families, employers, insurers, and government should be in paying for health care.</li> </ul> <p><b>What should the responsibilities of individuals and families be in paying for health care? What should be the roles of employers, insurers and government?"</b></p>
<p><b>Tradeoffs and Options</b> <i>Suggested Time: 15 Minutes</i></p>	<p>Ask participants to turn to the Tradeoffs section of their Discussion Guide (pages 14-15) and to read the information provided. You may want to ask a volunteer to read the section out loud.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "The fourth question Congress asked is: What tradeoffs are the American public willing to make in either benefits or financing to ensure access to affordable, high quality health care coverage and services?"</li> <li>• "Let's take a few minutes to review the background on Tradeoffs in our Discussion Guide on pages 14-15." (<i>Wait 2-3 minutes.</i>)</li> <li>• "Does anyone have any questions about anything that you read? Our task is to discuss:</li> </ul>

Agenda Item	Activity Summary	Suggested Talking Points
	<p>Read the discussion question out loud and ask the group to take a minute to think about their answers. Suggest that they write down their thoughts.</p> <p>Ask the group to share some of their answers.</p> <p>Look for and identify common ideas across the group's discussion.</p>	<p><b>Some believe that fixing the health care system will require tradeoffs from everyone – e.g. hospitals, employers, insurers, consumers, government agencies. What could be done — and by whom?</b></p> <p><i>By “tradeoff” we mean reducing or eliminating something to get more of something else. In answering this question, be sure to frame your answers in terms of tradeoffs.</i></p> <p>Some examples of trade-offs include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accepting a significant wait time for non-critical care to obtain a 10% reduction in health care costs.</li> <li>• Paying a higher deductible in your insurance for more choice of physicians and hospitals (or paying a lower deductible with less choice).</li> <li>• Paying more in taxes to have health care coverage for all. This could mean limiting coverage to high deductible/catastrophic care or, if you were willing to pay more, a more comprehensive package.</li> <li>• Expanding federal programs to cover more people, but providing fewer services to those currently covered in those programs.</li> <li>• Limiting coverage for certain end of life care of questionable value in order to provide more at home and comfort care for the dying.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Next Steps and Closing</b></p> <p><i>Suggested Time: 5 Minutes</i></p>	<p>Thank everyone for participating. Remind them of the Citizens' Health Care Working Group website and what will happen with their input.</p> <p>Ask participants for feedback on what could have been better about the meeting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I want to thank everyone for coming and for making this such a useful discussion. I know, too, that the Citizens' Health Care Working Group appreciates your taking part in this national discussion.”</li> <li>• “Please take a minute to complete the questionnaire before you go. It is also available online.”</li> <li>• “I hope that everyone will stay involved in this process. You can learn more about getting involved at the Citizens' Health Care Working Group website (<a href="http://www.citizenshealthcare.gov">www.citizenshealthcare.gov</a>). Please help spread the word about this initiative by hosting your own meeting, or by sending the website link to your friends, family, and neighbors.”</li> </ul>

Agenda Item	Activity Summary	Suggested Talking Points
	Fill out the Meeting Summary online.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="776 216 1433 384">• "I will be entering the notes of our discussion online at the Working Group website so that they will include our thoughts in the recommendations to the President and Congress."</li><li data-bbox="776 415 1317 447">• "Once again, thank you for coming."</li></ul>

## Modifying the Agenda to Meet Your Needs

The Community Meeting agenda described on the previous pages of this guide should take about ninety minutes to complete. If you have significantly less or more time than that available for your discussion, then you may need to modify the agenda to meet your needs. Below are some suggestions on how to modify the agenda so that it will fit into different time frames.

### More than Ninety Minutes

If you have more than ninety minutes to spend on the meeting, then you may want to give the group more time to talk about each area. For example, if you had two hours, you could add five minutes to each discussion session and the “Next Steps” session.

You could also ask additional questions. Below, please find additional questions for each of the four major issue areas. These questions should be asked after the group has already reviewed and answered the questions found in the facilitator script:

#### American Values

***Question: Should it be public policy that all Americans have affordable health care insurance or other coverage? [By public policy we mean that the stated public goal is set out in federal or state law.]***

#### Benefits and Services

It would be difficult to define a level of basic services for everyone. Page 9 of the discussion guide has a list of services provided under a health plan that many people view as typical that may serve as a reference point.

***Question: Should there be a “basic” level of services for health insurance that everyone should be able to obtain (either on their own or with assistance from employers or the government)?***

***Question: If so, how would a basic package compare to this “typical” plan? Are there benefits that you would add or that you would take out?***

#### Getting Health Care

***Question: Which kinds of difficulties in getting health care are the most important to address?***

***Question: What is most important to you and your family when you deal with the health care system?***

#### Financing

***Question: Should everyone be required to enroll in basic health care coverage, either private or public?***

Many factors contribute to rising costs, including how we use technology and the prices of the health care services we use. Inefficiency also contributes to higher costs. We pay for health care in a very complicated way. Complex billing and paperwork result in high administrative costs in the United States and can be frustrating for patients, doctors, hospitals, and insurance companies.

**Question: What can be done to slow the growth of health care costs in America?**

**Question: What criteria should be used for making some people pay more?**

Examples:

Everyone should pay the same amount for the same coverage, or premiums should be adjusted based on factors such as

- Family size
- Behaviors
- Income

**Question: Many Americans get their health insurance through their employers. Should public policy continue to use tax rules to encourage employer-based health insurance?**

## Tradeoffs and Options

**Question: How much more would you personally be willing to pay in a year (in premiums, taxes, or through other means) to support efforts that would result in every American having access to affordable, high quality health care coverage and services?**

1. \$0
2. \$1 - \$100
3. \$100 - \$299
4. \$300 - \$999
5. \$1000 or more
6. Don't know

**Question: Considering the rising cost of health care, what are the most important priorities for public spending to reach the goal of health care that works for all Americans?**

See the first set of bullets on page 14 of the discussion guide for some ideas to consider.

## Less Than Ninety Minutes

If you have less than ninety minutes, it is still possible to have a meaningful and worthwhile meeting about health care that will work for all Americans. Among your options for shortening the agenda are:

- **Omit Steps of the Meeting:** If you have between 45 minutes and an hour and a half, you will have to skip some parts of the agenda. A sample agenda for an hour-long meeting can be found below.

### Sample Agenda

- I. **Welcome and Overview (5 minutes)**  
Brief welcoming comments  
Overview of meeting purpose/agenda
- II. **Intro to the Citizens' Health Care Working Group (10 minutes)**  
Watch video or go through slide show introducing process
- III. **Choose Any Two Discussion Sections (40 minutes)**  
Ask members of the group to share their thoughts  
Identify common themes
- IV. **Next Steps and Closing (5 minutes)**  
Explain next steps of process  
Thank participants for attending

- **Conduct Multiple Sessions:** Some groups that meet regularly (civic groups, service clubs, college classes, etc) may only have an hour or so each time they meet, but might be interested in scheduling a series of Community Meetings on different topics. You may wish to encourage groups to do this as a way of having longer, more in depth meetings over time.

# NEXT STEPS

## What Happens Next?

It is important that participants in your meeting understand that their discussions are part of a larger process that will lead to real action. This spring, the Citizens' Health Care Working Group will be listening to Americans talk about health care all over the country. After these Community Meetings, the Working Group will put together recommendations based on what they heard; the recommendations will be made to the President and Congress.

- **How Will Ideas from the Meetings be Used?**

The Citizens' Health Care Working Group will develop interim recommendations based on input from citizens at these meetings. The interim recommendations will be developed and circulated to the public for comment in the summer of 2006. Following a 90-day public comment period, the Working Group will submit a final set of recommendations to Congress and the President that includes the results of this public input.

- **How Can People Stay Involved?**

The Citizens' Health Care Working Group hopes that everyone who takes part in a meeting will remain involved with the process. Among the things that citizens can do to stay involved:

**Visit the Citizens' Health Care Working Group website at [www.citizenshealthcare.gov](http://www.citizenshealthcare.gov)**

- Take the health care poll, share your own experiences, and tell us what needs to be done about health care
- Begin a blog on the Working Group's web site to share your views, opinions and concerns with others and submit entries to the on-line Discussion Forums
- Sign up to receive Working Group updates or keep track of new developments and opportunities to get involved
- Volunteer to host a Community Meeting
- Work with your family, friends, co-workers, and neighbors to spread the word about the Citizens' Health Care Working Group

- **How Will this Process Make a Difference?**

This is an unprecedented opportunity for citizens around the country to voice their opinions on how health care should work in the United States. And your voice does matter. Your opinions will help form a citizens' action plan that the President and Congress are required by law to consider as they work to make health care work for all Americans.

This is a chance for you to help shape national policy.

It is a chance to get the facts, weigh the tradeoffs, and tell the President and Congress exactly how you want your health care system to change. And you need to take part:

- Because as a citizen, you care about your health and that of your family, friends, neighbors, and community.
- Because as a consumer, you care about having access to affordable care that's high quality.
- Because as a taxpayer, you care about keeping the cost of care under control, and you want it delivered as efficiently and as waste-free as possible.

***This is a discussion that can't happen without you. Your voice does matter!***